



Quality Assurance Report

2024 Annual Report

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Submitted to:

**Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of Childhood**

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2024 Quality Assurance Annual Report

Overview

The Quality Assurance Report (QAR) is the state-wide quality recognition system for Missouri. It began in its current form in 2022, with continued program development and implementation throughout this year. Most early learning programs serving children birth to 5 years are eligible to participate in QAR. Programs enrolled in QAR are eligible to engage in the following support services:

- Classroom Observations,
- One-on-one personalized coaching support for educators,
- Access to tailored professional development opportunities, include Child Development Associate credential support, and
- Support in continued program-wide quality improvement planning.

The following information in this report outlines the QAR activities for 2024.

Program Information

A total of 418 programs are currently enrolled in QAR, serving 21,603 children in 1,401 classrooms. This is an increase from 2023 of 219 programs and 712 classrooms. (See Table 1.)

Table 1. Quality Assurance Report Program Details

Program Information	#	%
Number of Programs	418	
Number of Classrooms	1,401	
Program Size		
Family Child Care	5	1.2%
Small Center (1-5 classrooms)	318	76.1%
Large Center (6+ classrooms)	95	22.7%
Program License Type		
Licensed	183	43.8%
Licensed Exempt	41	9.8%
Licensed Family Child Care Home	5	1.2%
Unlicensed	189	45.2%
Region (Classrooms)		
North Central	43	3.1%

Northwest	30	2.1%
Northeast	25	1.8%
Kansas City Area	226	16.1%
Central	163	11.6%
St. Louis Area	430	30.7%
Southwest	289	20.6%
Southeast	195	13.9%
Total Child Enrollment Capacity		21,603
Licensed	11,195	51.8%
Licensed Exempt	2,759	12.8%
Licensed Family Child Care Home	47	0.2%
Unlicensed	7,293	33.8%
# of Programs Receiving State Subsidy	264	63.2%
# of Program Receiving Head Start Funding	45	10.8%

Coaching Implementation

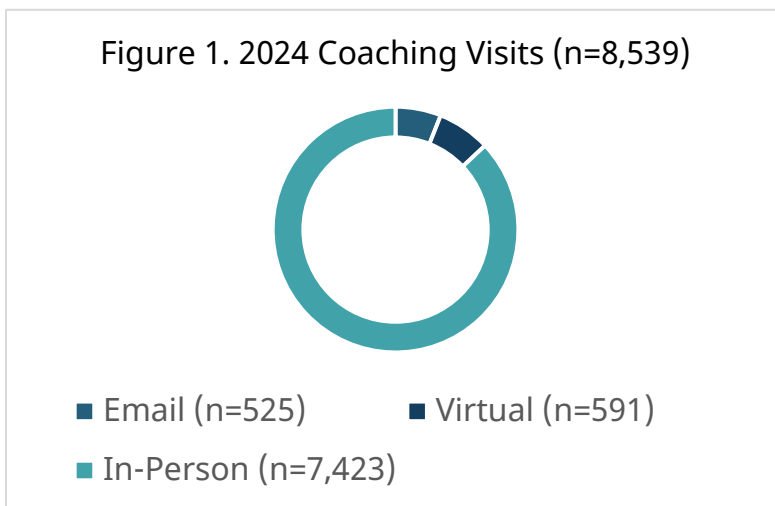
Background. The QAR system utilizes the Practice-Based Coachingⁱ (PBC) model for structured coaching implementation. PBC is a cyclical process for supporting teaching and administrative staff's use of effective practices that lead to positive outcomes for children and programs. Fundamental to PBC is Establishing the Partnership, an essential element to coaching cycle components that ensures collaboration between the coach and coachee. The coaching cycle components are: 1) Shared goals and action planning, 2) Focused observations, and 3) Reflection and feedback. ECIC is using a hybrid-coaching format, with monthly on-site coaching sessions, and monthly virtual coaching visits with teachers and administrators.

Program administrators and teachers receive individual feedback, delivered by their assigned Early Childhood Quality Specialist (ECQS). The ECQS meet with the program director for center-based educators to debrief assessment scores, review coaching expectations through review of the Coaching Agreement, and share how educator goals will be shared. Specialists then engage in coaching with educators using the Practice-Based Coaching model. The initial educator visit includes discussion of the Coaching Agreement and the implementation of different coaching strategies, gathering input into preferred coaching strategies to guide coaching activities. Subsequent visits involve sharing individual classroom

assessment scores, completing individual needs assessments on identified teaching practices, and beginning the PBC coaching cycles starting with goal and action planning, following with the remain components of focused observation and reflection and feedback.

Delivery. QAR coaches delivered a total of 8,539 coaching visits in 2024 that totaled 4,509 hours of coaching. (See Figure 1.) These consisted of three different types of coaching visits.

- In-Person – Visits are on-site with educators or program administrators to implement the various components of the PBC coaching model. A total of 7,423 in-person visits were delivered and averaged 33 minutes.
- Virtual – Virtual visits occurred most frequently using the Zoom video conferencing platform. A total of 591 virtual visits were conducted and averaged 23 minutes.
- Email – Coaches also recorded substantive coaching that occurred via e-mail. A total of 525 email communications were reported, with coaches spending between 5-10 minutes per message.



Each coaching session focused on one of more components of the PBC model. Most coaching sessions focused on Establishing the Partnership (43%). This follows the expectation for the PBC model to build a collaborative partnership with educators as an on-going process. For the remaining components of PBC, coaches spent 31% of coaching session with a focus on Shared Goals and Action Planning, followed by 16% on Focused Observations, and 10% on Reflection and Feedback. Coaches also reported which coaching strategies they used during coaching sessions. Multiple methods could be used in one coaching session. Most frequently coaches engaged in problem-solving discussions (32%), other help in the practice setting (26%), and modeling (20%).

An essential component of PBC is for educators to select their own preferred goals. For infant educators, goals commonly focused on facilitated exploration (36%) and early language support (35%). For toddler educators, goals most frequently focused on behavior guidance (36%) and language modeling (20%). For preschool educators, goals most frequently focused on dimensions in the classroom organization domain (44%), followed by instructional support (36%), and emotional support (21%). Coaches reported on the status of goals at coaching visits, with 51% of visits indicating that educators were making progress on their goal with continued action plan implementation. A total of 1,793 goals were created and 778 were marked as achieved.

Another element of PBC coaching included providing supportive resources to educators to make progress and achieve their goals. A total of 5,077 resource materials were provided during coaching in 2024. Resources included referral to the Teachstone website educator resources (n=1,201), materials for supporting educators in the classroom (n=1,018), CLASS specific materials (n=970), QAR implementation resources (917), resources from NAEYC (n=480), Conscious Discipline materials (n=390), other resource articles (n=65), and self-coaching resources (n=36).

CLASS Observations

CLASS Overview. The CLASS is an observational tool used to evaluate the process quality of early childhood classrooms. The CLASS focuses on observed teacher-child interactions through a series of four short observation rounds (15 to 20 minutes per round depending on the instrument used). After each observation round, each dimension is scored on a scale of 1 to 7. Scores are determined by scoring indicators for each dimension low, mid, or high. CLASS instruments are tailored to different age groupings: infant (0-18 months), toddlers (19 to 35 months), and preschool (3 to 5 years). Beginning in 2022, Teachstone published a revised and updated version of the Pre-K CLASS tool (2nd Edition). This instrument was used assess preschool classrooms beginning in 2023, along with the CLASS Infant and CLASS Toddler instruments. Table 2 outlines the domains and dimensions for each CLASS instrument.

Table 2. Domains and Dimensions of the CLASS

Infant (Birth to 18 months) ⁱⁱ	Toddler (19 to 35 months) ⁱⁱⁱ	Pre-K to 2 nd Edition (3-5 years old) ^{iv}
Responsive Caregiving • Relational Climate • Teacher Sensitivity • Facilitated Exploration • Early Language Support	Emotional and Behavioral Support • Positive Climate • Negative Climate • Teacher Sensitivity • Regard for Child Perspectives • Behavior Guidance	Emotional Support • Positive Climate • Negative Climate • Educator Sensitivity • Regard for Child Perspective
	Engaged Support for Learning • Facilitation of Learning and Development • Quality of Feedback • Language Modeling	Classroom Organization • Behavior Management • Productivity • Instructional Learning Formats
		Instructional Support • Concept Development • Quality of Feedback • Language Modeling

CLASS Observations. A total of 1,304 classrooms were observed in 2024. These classrooms consisted of 134 infant classrooms (10.3%), 304 toddler classrooms (23.3%), and 553 preschool classrooms (66.4%). Overall, average scores have not deviated from prior years significantly. Also, average scores for each instrument scored above published national average scores for each instrument. Scores in relational and emotional support dimensions continue to score on the medium-high range. Dimensions on instructional support and support for learning continue to demonstrate a need to additional support in most classrooms. Table 3 shows CLASS scores for 2024.

Table 3. CLASS Observation Scores by Instrument

CLASS Instrument	Average Score	National Average
CLASS Infant (n=134)		
Responsive Caregiving	4.58	-
Relational Climate	5.47	5.04
Teacher Sensitivity	5.26	4.75
Facilitated Exploration	3.90	3.68
Early Language Support	3.70	3.31
CLASS Toddler (n=304)		
Emotional and Behavioral Support	5.31	-
Positive Climate	5.53	5.03
Negative Climate ¹	6.72	5.30
Teacher Sensitivity	5.11	4.33
Regard for Child Perspectives	4.69	4.36
Behavior Guidance	4.52	4.07
Engaged Support for Learning	3.03	-
Facilitation of Learning and Development	3.43	3.43
Quality of Feedback	2.45	-
Language Modeling	3.20	2.22
CLASS Pre-K (n=866)		
Emotional Support	5.72	-
Positive Climate	5.88	5.21
Negative Climate ⁴	6.78	6.37
Teacher Sensitivity	5.42	4.34
Regard for Student Perspective	4.80	4.36
Classroom Organization	5.32	-
Behavior Management	5.46	4.94
Productivity	5.69	5.41
Instructional Learning Formats	4.83	4.57
Instructional Support	2.82	-
Concept Development	2.55	2.69
Quality of Feedback	2.65	2.87
Language Modeling	3.26	2.85

¹ Scores for these dimensions are reverse-coded for this item and have been adjusted to match the 1-7 scale.

CLASS Environment. Beginning in 2023, new programs also had the CLASS Environment assessments conducted in their classrooms. The CLASS Environment measure is a supplemental tool designed for use in conjunction with the CLASS observation, which describes and measures features of the environment that can support effective interactions. The CLASS Environment assessments are divided into two instruments: Infant-Toddler (birth to 35 months) and Pre-K - K (36 months to kindergarten). The Infant-Toddler tool consists of 32 items (14 in Emotional and Behavioral Support and 18 in Engaged Support for Learning) and the Pre-K-K tool consists of 29 items (10 in Emotional Support, 8 in Classroom Organization, and 11 in Instructional Support). Items were scored on a scale of 1 to 3 (1 – no, none. never, 2 – few, some, limited, and 3 – most, many, varied), correlate with the CLASS dimensions for each tool.

Most Environment scores averaged in the “*few, some, limited*” range. The overall infant/toddler classroom average was 2.32 and the overall preschool average was 2.48. This demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of programs meet environment requirements. Table 4 shows the results of the domain average scores for the CLASS Environment assessments for infant/toddler and Pre-K classrooms.

Table 4. CLASS Environment Average Scores

CLASS Environment Instrument	Average Score
CLASS Environment Infant/Toddler Classrooms (n=438)	2.32
Emotional and Behavioral Support	2.35
Engaged Support for Learning	2.30
CLASS Environment Pre-K Classrooms (n=866)	2.48
Emotional Support	2.60
Classroom Organization	2.67
Instructional Support	2.28

QAR Quality Designation

A total of 404 programs have been assessed for Quality Interactions based on thresholds. Thresholds consisted of the following guidelines:

- Teacher-Child Interactions
 - Infant CLASS (birth to 17 months)

- Responsive Caregiving domain score is an average of 4.50 or higher for all infant classrooms combined. Additionally, no infant classroom scores below 3.00 in the Relational Climate dimension.
- Toddler CLASS (18 to 35 months)
 - Emotional & Behavior Support domain score is an average of 5.00 or higher for all toddler classrooms combined. Additionally, no toddler classroom scores higher than 2.00 in Negative Climate dimension.
 - Engaged Support for Learning domain score is an average of 2.50 or higher for all toddler classrooms combined.
- Pre-K CLASS (3 to 5 years)
 - Emotional Support domain score is an average of 5.00 or higher for all preschool classrooms combined. Additionally, no preschool classroom scores higher than 2.00 in Negative Climate dimension.
 - Classroom Organization domain score is an average of 4.50 or higher for all preschool classrooms combined.
 - Instructional Support domain score is an average of 2.30 or higher for all preschool classrooms combined.
- Classroom Environment
 - Infant/Toddler CLASS Environment (birth to 35 months)
 - An instrument average of 2.00 or higher for all infant/toddler classrooms combined.
 - Pre-K CLASS Environment (3 to 5 years)
 - An instrument average of 2.00 or higher for all preschool classrooms combined.

A total of 404 programs, comprised of 1,301 classrooms were assessed and a quality interactions determination was made. Of these, 234 programs (58%) met the quality interactions thresholds. This consisted of 658 (51%) classrooms, of which 507 were preschool, 115 were toddler, and 36 were infant. These 234 programs have moved forward in their quality journey and are working towards a DESE quality program designation. Details of classrooms by program status is reported in Table 5.

Table 5. QAR Program Classroom Detail by Quality Thresholds

	Program Passed Quality Interactions Threshold			Programs Didn't Pass Quality Interactions Threshold			Total Classrooms		
	Class-room Pass	Class-room Did not Pass	Total	Class-room Pass	Class-room Did not Pass	Total	Class-room Pass	Class-room Did not Pass	Total
Infant	33	3	36	37	60	97	70	63	133
Toddler	102	13	115	92	98	190	194	111	305
Pre-K	443	64	507	105	251	356	548	315	863
Total	578	80	658	234	409	643	812	489	1,301

Of the 170 programs that did not pass threshold, 78 (46%) missed by only one of the eleven components. Two trends emerged with these programs:

- 75 of these 78 programs had preschool classrooms. Of these, 44 (59%) did not meet the Instructional Support domain indicator.
- 24 had infant classrooms and of these, 11 programs (54%) with infant rooms did not meet the average score for the Relational Climate domain.

Furthermore, most programs were successful with two main components: emotional support and environmental supports in all applicable age groups. Areas where programs need the most support was overwhelmingly in preschool classrooms for instructional support and in infant classrooms for responsive caregiving. (See Table 6.)

Table 6. QAR Quality Interactions Components for Programs That Did Not Meet Thresholds

Quality Interactions Components	Number	Percent
Programs with Infant Classrooms	72	42%
Responsive Caregiving	26	36%
Relational Climate	68	94%
Programs with Toddler Classrooms	88	52%
Emotional and Behavioral Support	48	55%

Engaged Support for Learning	52	59%
Negative Climate	74	84%
Programs with Infant and/or Toddler Classrooms	92	54%
Infant/Toddler Environments	74	80%
Programs with Preschool Classrooms	166	98%
Emotional Support	116	70%
Classroom Organization	105	63%
Instructional Support	51	31%
Negative Climate	141	85%
Pre-K Environments	151	91%

Professional Development

In 2024, QAR offered several types of professional development to QAR participants. QAR program staff conducted different types of training opportunities for participants: presentations at the Conference on the Young Years and Class Group Coaching. Also, in 2024 QAR supported educators in working towards and achieving their CDA Credential.

- 23 presentations 1-hour sessions at CYY to 1,326 session attendees.²
- Four initial CDA and two renewal applications were processed with the CDA Council for Professional Recognition. Six participants completed their coursework through myTeachstone CDA coursework, and another 140 are currently enrolled in coursework through myTeachstone CDA.

ⁱ Snyder, P., Hemmeter, M.L., Fox, L. (2022). *Essentials of Practice-Based Coaching: supporting effective practices in early childhood*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

ⁱⁱ Hamre, B.K., La Paro, K.M., Pianta, R.C., & LoCasale-Crouch, J. (2014). *Classroom assessment scoring system manual: Infant*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

ⁱⁱⁱ La Paro, K.M., Hamre, B.K., & Pianta, R.C. (2012). *Classroom assessment scoring system manual: Toddler*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

^{iv} Teachstone (2022). *Classroom assessment scoring system 2nd Edition: Pre-K-3rd Observation Field Guide*. Teachstone.

² Attendees may have attended more than one session.